

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 187

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 65

Assembly Concurrent Resolution No. 187—Relative to the 60th anniversary of the fall of Bataan.

[Filed with Secretary of State May 29, 2002.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

ACR 187, Nakano. Fall of Bataan.

This measure would recognize April 9, 2002, as the 60th anniversary of the fall of Bataan and honor the services of the Filipino-American World War II veterans now living in the State of California.

WHEREAS, Approximately 200,000 Filipino soldiers, driven by a sense of honor and dignity, battled under the United States Command after 1941 to preserve our liberty; and

WHEREAS, The vast majority of American soldiers who opposed the Japanese invasion of the Philippines from December 1941 through March 1942 were Filipinos, who gallantly fought down the length of the Bataan Peninsula, and endured unbearable hardships during the siege of Corregidor; and

WHEREAS, The surrender of American and Filipino troops by General King on April 9, 1942, on the Bataan Peninsula led to the infamous Bataan death march; and

WHEREAS, April 9, 1942, is remembered in the world and in United States history as the fall of Bataan in the Philippines, where 90,000 troops of the United States Armed Forces in the Far East fought for five months under the courageous leadership of Lieutenant General Jonathan M. Wainwright and delayed the Japanese forces timetable to conquer the Pacific and finally, after facing insurmountable odds, surrendered to the Japanese forces; and

WHEREAS, On June 14, 1944, President Franklin D. Roosevelt paid tribute to these fighters when he said “We are ever mindful of the heroic role of the Philippines and their people on the present historical conflict. Theirs is the only substantial area and theirs is the only substantial population under the American flag to suffer a lengthy invasion by the enemy”; and

WHEREAS, Congress passed legislation in 1946 limiting and precluding Filipino veterans that fought in the service of the United States during World War II from receiving most veterans benefits that were available to them before 1946; and

WHEREAS, On the 60th year anniversary of the fall of Bataan, there are still 13,000 Filipino-American World War II veterans living in the United States, and 6,000 of them are residents of California on the West Coast and 60,000 in the Philippines who are still not recognized as American World War II veterans and are living under deplorable conditions; and

WHEREAS, It is fitting and proper that we honor the sacrifices and services of these individuals and pay tribute to the heroism of the Filipino forces under the United States Armed Forces in the Far East and the more than 200,000 guerrilla fighters who fought for more than three years under the occupation to defend the flag of the United States in its only colonial possession in Southeast Asia during the Second World War; and

WHEREAS, On this occasion we call on our legislators in the United States Congress and in the State of California to honor these men and women who served and fought for the United States by supporting the Filipino Veterans Equity Bill (HR 491 in the House of Representatives and SB 1042 in the Senate) that will remedy their lack of status and recognize them as United States World War II veterans; and

WHEREAS, We remember the 60th anniversary of the fall of Bataan, April 9, 2002, and we honor, as well as recognize, the services of the 200,000 Filipino and American soldiers who fought for democracy to defeat the overwhelming invading forces in Asia and the Pacific; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly of the State of California, the Senate concurring, That April 9, 2002, is hereby remembered as the 60th anniversary of the fall of Bataan; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly shall transmit copies of this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.

